THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The allegations made therein are not borne out by facts.

Detection of HIV Positive cases in Pondicherry

1643. SHRI RAM NATH KOVIND: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it has been reported that 1700 persons found to be HIV positive cases out of the 60,000 blood samples tested in recent past in Union Territory of Pondicherry;

(b) if so, whether organisation of such blood samples was made by Project Officer, AIDS Control, Pondicherry;

(c) whether Government propose to issue instructions to Project Officer, AIDS Control Programmes of all States and Union Territories to undertake samples of blood to detect HIV positive cases in their respective areas;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI): (a) As on 30th June, 1996 out of 67096 samples screened, 1864 HIV Positive cases have been reported from Govt. of Pondicherry so far.

(b) Blood samples were sent to Surveillance Centres in Pondicherry for surveillance purposes in coordination with State AIDS Programme Officer, Pondicherry.

(c) and (d) In all State and Union Territories of the country, there are 62 surveillance centres doing screening for blood to detect HIV Positive cases.

(e) Does not arise.

News-item regarding PSF duty Evasion

1644. SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: SHRI BANGARU LAXMAN:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item appearing in the Business Standard of 19th June, 1996 under the caption "Probe into Rs. 1000 crores PSF Duty Evasion"; and

(b) if so, what action has been taken to recover the Central excise duty allegedly evaded by manufacturers of polyester staple fibre and its users?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Directorate General of Anti Evasion of Central Board of Excise and Customs has already initiated investigation against some manufacturers of Polyester Staple Fibres and Spinners of yarn. It has revealed, *prima-facie*, evasion of Central Excise duty of the order of Rs. 15 crores. A Show Cause Notice demanding central excise duty of Rs. 24.79 lakhs has been issued to one of the fibre manufacturer.

Recovery of proceedings can only be initiated after the alleged duty evasion is established and quantified by way of adjudication.

6.00 P.M.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

(1) Notification of the M/o Finance, (Deptt. of Eco. Affairs)

(2) Notification of the State Bank of India

(3) Notifications of the M/o Finance (Deptt. of Revenue).

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) (Madam) I lay on the Table—